



NEWS RELEASE

**FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE
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Statement by FMCS Director George H. Cohen On Verizon-CWA-IBEW Tentative Agreement

NEW YORK, N.Y. — “I am extremely pleased to announce that at the culmination of two months of intense but constructive, highly focused negotiations under the auspices of myself and my colleagues, the parties negotiated a successor collective bargaining agreement. This successful outcome is yet another example of the fact that the process of collective bargaining—a cornerstone of our industrial democracy system—provides the parties the best opportunity to accommodate their strongly held competing positions.

“What we witnessed was a classic case of all the parties being continuously committed to a problem-solving mind set. Virtually every article of the contract was scrutinized paragraph by paragraph and sentence by sentence. In all aspects—during the across the table negotiations, in the parties’ respective caucuses, in the confidential sidebars with the mediators, and, likewise, when drafting and exchanging numerous proposals and counter proposals became relevant—the parties remained zeroed in on problem solving. The resulting successful application of that technique combined with their mutual desire to reach an agreement should serve as an example for labor-management practitioners to emulate.”

“It was an honor and privilege for myself, Deputy Director Scot Beckenbaugh and Director of Mediation Services John Pinto to have assisted the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, two highly respected unions representing approximately 45,000 working men and women, and Verizon Communications Inc., one of the nation’s leading corporations, in this noteworthy endeavor. In plain terms, this agreement will provide a stable working environment for all parties concerned over the course of the next three years.

“Out of respect for the ratification processes to be applied by each party, the Agency will not disclose any of the details of this agreement.”

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The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, created in 1947, is an independent U.S. government agency whose mission is to preserve and promote labor-management peace and cooperation. Headquartered in Washington, DC, with 10 district offices and 67 field offices, the agency provides mediation and conflict resolution services to industry, government agencies and communities.